## Message Text

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**UNCLAS MONTREAL 1492** 

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAGR, ECON, CA

SUBJECT: QUEBEC SUPPORTS NATIONAL MARKETING PROGRAM FOR CHICKENS

- 1. QUEBEC HAS BECOME FIFTH PROVINCE TO SIGN A FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL AGREEMENT FOR A NATIONAL CHICKEN MARKETING PROGRAM. PROGRAM WOULD ESTABLISH PRODUCTION QUOTAS BY PROVINCE AND LIMIT IMPORTS OF CHICKENS FROM U.S. WHILE SOME PROVINCES ARE REPORTED TO BE LUKEWARM TO IDEA OF NATIONAL PLAN, QUEBEC HAS BEEN ACTIVELY PUSHING FOR ACTION TO LIMIT IMPORTS IN VIEW OF RAPIDLY INCREASING IMPORTS OF CHICKENS FROM U.S. GOVERNMENT SOURCES SAID THERE IS POSSIBILITY PLAN MAY BE IMPLEMENTED WITHOUT AGREEMENT OF THOSE PROVINCES HOLDING OUT, AS FIVE WHO HAVE RATIFIED THE PROGRAM (NOVA SCOTIA, ONTARIO, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, SASKATCHEWAN, QUEBEC) ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN 80 PERCENT OF CANADIAN CHICKEN PRODUCTION.
- 2. WITH QUOTAS FOR PROVINCIAL PRODUCTION BASED ON AVERAGES DURING LAST FIVE YEARS, QUEBEC WOULD BE AUTHORIZED, IF PLAN IS IMPLEMENTED, TO PRODUCE 206 MILLION POUNDS OF BROILER CHICKENS AND 32 MILLION POUNDS OF LARGER CHICKENS, ABOUT 35 PERCENT AND 56 PERCENT, RESPECTIVELY, OF TOTAL CANADIAN PRODUCTION.
- 3. QUEBEC AGRICULTURAL MINISTER, JEAN GARON, SAID QUEBEC'S UNCLASSIFIED

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QUOTA WOULD HAVE BEEN HIGHER IF QUOTAS HAD BEEN BASED ON EARLIER PERIOD, AS GREATLY INCREASED IMPORTS FROM U.S. HAVE ADVERSELY AFFECTED QUEBEC PRODUCTION. GARON SAID CANADA'S IMPORTS OF CHICKENS FROM U.S. HAD INCREASED FROM 16.5 MILLION POUNDS IN 1974 TO 69.6 MILLION POUNDS IN 1976.

4. COMMENT: GARON INJECTED QUEBEC POLITICS INTO ISSUE BY

STATING THAT FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAM WOULD DEMONSTRATE TO QUEBEC PRODUCERS WHY QUEBEC SOVEREIGNTY-ASSOCIATION WOULD BE A MUCH BETTER SYSTEM FOR QUEBEC. UNDER PLANS OF PARTI QUEBECOIS FOR POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY, COUPLED WITH ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION, QUEBEC WOULD BE FREE TO SET ITS OWN IMPORT LIMITS, GARON SAID.

5. PROBLEM OF IMPORTS OF U.S. CHICKENS INTO QUEBEC IS NOT A NEW ONE. IN 1975, QUEBEC FARMERS BLOCKADED SEVERAL ESTABLISHMENTS IMPORTING U.S. CHICKENS AND DID MINOR DAMAGE TO TRUCKS TRANSPORTING CHICKENS FROM U.S. WE CANNOT DISCOUNT POSSIBILITY OF SIMILAR DISRUPTIONS SHOULD NATIONAL MARKETING PROGRAM FAIL TO BE IMPLEMENTED. HARPER

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